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Commissioner, Kozo Oikawa

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[Designation of Document] Specification

[Title of the Invention] Image Storage Service System, Image Storage Server and Mobile Telephone

[Claims]

[Claim 1] An image storage service system for storing digital image information, comprising:

an image storage server connected to a network; and

a mobile telephone to which a removable recording medium recording digital image information can be attached and which can be connected to the network,

wherein the mobile telephone serves to transmit the digital image information recorded in the recording medium to the image storage server through the network, and

the image storage server serves to store the digital image information thus received and to transmit storage processing information to the mobile telephone carrying out the transmission after a storage processing.

[Claim 2] The image storage service system according to claim 1, wherein after transmission and receipt of the digital image information are terminated, the mobile telephone and the image storage server are once disconnected from each other, and

the image storage server serves to carry out a connection to the mobile telephone again during the transmission of the storage processing information.

[Claim 3] The image storage service system according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the mobile telephone serves to erase the transmitted digital image information from the recording medium depending on the storage processing information which is received.

[Claim 4] The image storage service system according to claim 3, wherein the mobile telephone serve to receive a storage processing signal and to then output contents thereof, and to wait for an erase indicating signal to be input and to erase the transmitted digital image information from the recording medium.

[Claim 5] The image storage service system according to any of claims 1 to 4, wherein the mobile telephone further has a function of transmitting, to the image storage server, print request information of the transmitted and stored digital image information, and

the image storage server further has a function of transmitting the stored digital image information to a predetermined printing destination when receiving the print request information.

[Claim 6] An image storage server for storing digital image information which receives digital image information to be stored which is transmitted from a mobile telephone through a network, and

stores the digital image information thus received

and transmits storage processing information to the mobile telephone carrying out the transmission after a storage processing.

[Claim 7] The image storage server according to claim 6, wherein the mobile telephone is once disconnected after the receipt of the digital image information is terminated, and the mobile telephone is connected again during the transmission of the storage processing information.

[Claim 8] The image storage server according to claim 6 or 7, further having a function of receiving a print request for the stored digital image information, and

a function of transmitting the stored digital image information to a predetermined printing destination when receiving the print request.

[Claim 9] The image storage server according to any of claims 6 to 8, further having a function of receiving a downloading request for the stored digital image information and

a function of transmitting the stored digital image information to a downloading request destination when receiving the downloading request.

[Claim 10] A mobile telephone accessible to an image storage server for storing digital image information through a network,

wherein a removable recording medium recording

digital image information can be attached to the mobile telephone,

the mobile telephone further having means for erasing the transmitted digital image information from the recording medium depending on storage processing information received from the image storage server after transmitting the digital image information recorded in the recording medium to the image storage server.

[Claim 11] The mobile telephone according to claim 10, wherein the image storage server is once disconnected after the transmission of the digital image information is terminated, and

the receipt of the storage processing information is carried out after the connection to the mobile telephone is performed again through the image storage server.

[Claim 12] The mobile telephone according to claim 10 or 11, wherein a storage processing signal is received and contents thereof are then output, and the transmitted digital image information is erased from the recording medium after waiting for an input of an erase indicating signal.

[Claim 13] The mobile telephone according to any of claims 10 to 12, further having a function of transmitting print request information of the transmitted and stored digital image information to the image storage server.

[Claim 14] The mobile telephone according to any of claims 10 to 13, further having a function of transmitting a downloading request of the stored digital image information, and

a function of recording, in the recording medium, the digital image information received based on the downloading request.

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Industrial Field of Application]

The present invention relates to a storage service system for storing digital image information, an image storage server and a mobile telephone for transmitting image information to be stored.

[0002]

[Prior Art]

Although image information photographed by a digital camera is recorded in a built-in memory for image storage which is provided in a camera or a recording medium which can be attached to and removed from the camera, the capacity of the memory provided in the camera is limited and a removable recording medium is generally utilized because image data can easily be handled. However, the recording medium which can be attached to and removed from a digital cameral for recording image information has a limited

recording capacity and is expensive, and is sold in only limited places. For this reason, it has been proposed that image information photographed at a moving destination is transferred to a computer at home by using a mobile telephone and the recorded information of the recording medium is erased and recycled.

[0003]

Moreover, a hard copy of an image photographed by a digital camera can also be printed through a color printer at home. In the case in which an image print of high quality is required, generally, a recording medium recording digital image data is brought to a service shop for providing a print service of high quality or digital image data are transmitted through a network 3, thereby giving an order of a print of high quality.

[0004]

[Problems that the Invention is to Solve]

However, in the case in which the photographed image information is to be transferred by using a mobile telephone at a moving destination, it cannot be clearly decided whether or not the transferred image information is reliability stored in a storage device to be a transfer destination. Therefore, there is an anxiety about the erase of the image information recorded in the recording medium.

[0005]

Moreover, one of features of the digital camera is that a photographed image can be confirmed at any time, and therefore, it is a matter of course that a request for immediately acquiring the confirmed image print is also given. As described above, however, a print order based on a digital image is to be given by bringing to a service shop or by means of a personal computer at home through a network. Therefore, it is impossible to satisfy the request for immediately acquiring an image print. Furthermore, the transfer of image information to a printing destination for each print order causes a user and an order system to have a great burden.

[0006]

It is an object of the invention to provide an image storage service system capable of confirming that image information transferred at a moving destination is reliably stored at a transfer destination. Moreover, it is an object of the invention to provide a service system capable of easily giving a print order for a digital image photographed at a moving destination from the moving destination or by means of a computer at home.

[0007]

[Means for Solving the Problems]

The invention provides an image storage service

system for storing digital image information, comprising an image storage server connected to a network, and a mobile telephone to which a removable recording medium recording digital image information can be attached and which can be connected to the network, wherein the mobile telephone serves to transmit the digital image information recorded in the recording medium to the image storage server through the network, and the image storage server serves to store the digital image information thus received and to transmit storage processing information to the mobile telephone carrying out the transmission after a storage processing.

[0008]

Moreover, after transmission and receipt of the digital image information are terminated, the mobile telephone and the image storage server are once disconnected from each other, and the image storage server serves to carry out a connection to the mobile telephone again during the transmission of the storage processing information.

[0009]

The mobile telephone in the image storage service system according to the invention further has a function of transmitting, to the image storage server, print request information of the transmitted and stored digital

image information, and the image storage server further has a function of transmitting the stored digital image information to a predetermined printing destination when receiving the print request information.

[0010]

The invention provides an image storage server for storing digital image information which receives digital image information to be stored which is transmitted from a mobile telephone through a network, and stores the digital image information thus received and transmits storage processing information to the mobile telephone carrying out the transmission after a storage processing. While it is indispensable to the storage processing information that whether or not the storage processing is completed (the storage fails) is indicated, a residual storage capacity, a saving period or a service charge may be included.

[0011]

Moreover, the mobile telephone is once disconnected after the receipt of the digital image information is terminated, and the mobile telephone is connected again during the transmission of the storage processing information.

[0012]

Furthermore, the image storage server further has

a function of receiving a print request for the stored digital image information, and a function of transmitting the stored digital image information to a predetermined printing destination when receiving the print request.

[0013]

Moreover, the image storage server further has a function of receiving a downloading request for the stored digital image information and a function of transmitting the stored digital image information to a downloading request destination when receiving the downloading request.

[0014]

The present invention provides a mobile telephone accessible to an image storage server for storing digital image information through a network, wherein a removable recording medium recording digital image information can be attached to the mobile telephone, the mobile telephone further having means for erasing the transmitted digital image information from the recording medium depending on storage processing information received from the image storage server after transmitting the digital image information recorded in the recording medium to the image storage server.

[0015]

Moreover, the image storage server is once

disconnected after the transmission of the digital image information is terminated, and the receipt of the storage processing information is carried out after the connection to the mobile telephone is performed again through the image storage server.

[0016]

Furthermore, a storage processing signal is received and contents thereof are then output, and the transmitted digital image information is erased from the recording medium after waiting for an input of an erase indicating signal.

[0017]

Moreover, the mobile telephone further has a function of transmitting print request information of the transmitted and stored digital image information to the image storage server.

[0018]

Furthermore, the mobile telephone further has a function of transmitting a downloading request of the stored digital image information, and a function of recording, in the recording medium, the digital image information received based on the downloading request.

[0019]

[Mode for Carrying Out the Invention]

An embodiment of the invention will be described

below with reference to Figs. 1 to 6. Fig. 1 is a diagram showing the schematic structure of an image storage system according to the invention. An image storage server 2 is connected to a network 1 including a mobile telephone service network for mutually connecting base stations, and a print server 3 can be connected to the image storage server 2. The print server 3 is provided in a service shop or a laboratory which carries out a print processing based on digital image information and serves to cause one or more printers to carry out a predetermined printing processing. In the drawing, only one print server is shown and a connection to a plurality of print servers can be carried out.

[0020]

A user requiring to transfer digital image information photographed by a digital camera attaches, to a mobile telephone 5, a recording medium 6 recording a photographed image which can be attached to and removed from the digital camera, and transmits the digital image information to be stored to the image storage server 2 through a base station 4 and the network 1. In that case, if the photographed digital image is to be printed at the same time, order request information is also transmitted together. The order request information includes print condition information for specifying at

least one of a printing method, a print size and the number of prints for each digital image to be printed. A mobile telephone number is utilized for the identification information of the user.

[0021]

When receiving the digital image information, the image storage server 2 stores the received image information and transmits, to the mobile telephone 5, storage processing information including a decision whether or not the storage has normally been carried out. In the case in which the print order request is transmitted at the same time, delivery information required for delivery such as digital image information to be printed, a print condition, the name of a print service user and information about a registered delivery destination are transmitted to the print server to be a printing destination.

[0022]

When receiving the storage processing information, the mobile telephone 5 carries out a processing of erasing the transmitted digital image information recorded in the recording medium 6. While a digital image is erased when the storage processing is normally carried out, the digital image may be automatically erased upon receipt thereof or the contents of the storage processing

information may be once displayed to wait for the instruction of the user and to then erase the digital image. For accounting with the storage service, a constant amount of money may be prepaid when making a contract with a specific server or a charge may be added to a telephone charge according to the amount of use of the service and may be thus collected.

[0023]

At the printing destination, an order print created based on the information transmitted to the print server is delivered to the registered delivery destination which is transmitted. A request for the delivery may be given to a distributor. After the delivery is completed, a printing charge is added to a telephone charge and is thus collected.

[0024]

A terminal device 7 is a computer of the user which can be connected to the network and serves to download the digital image information stored in the image storage server 2 or to give a print order for the stored digital image. In the drawing, only one terminal device 7 is illustrated.

[0025]

Fig. 2 shows the schematic structure of the image storage server. The image storage server 2 comprises a

control section 21, a storage section 22, a file device 23 and a communicating section 24. The control section 21 serves to control the whole operation of the print image storage server 2 and, more specifically, is mainly constituted by a processor for operating according to a program stored in the storage section 22. The storage section 22 serves to store the program and various data for controlling the operation of the image storage server 2 and is used as a temporary saving area for the digital image information and order request information which are transmitted from the mobile telephone and a work area of the processor. The file device 23 includes at least a storage section for the digital image information transmitted from the mobile telephone, various data to be utilized for a print order and a service user table. The communicating section 24 serves to control transmission and receipt to and from the network 1 and the print server 3.

[0026]

The storage section included and held in the file device 23 is an area in which the image information transmitted from the mobile telephone is to be stored for each user every transmission date. Data utilized for the print order include the print throughput of a printing destination and delivery region information

corresponding to the printing destination or the print server. The print throughput includes a printing method, a print size and their processing speeds which can be received.

[0027]

The service user table records the ID of a mobile telephone owner previously registered as a storage service user, the name of the owner and delivery destination information for giving a print order corresponding to each other. The ID can utilize a telephone number. Moreover, the service user utilizing the mobile telephone may record a personal identification number for confirming a true owner together. The service user table is created by registering image storage utilization when the mobile telephone is purchased. While the file device 23 is provided in the image storage server 2 in the drawing, it may be provided on the outside of the server 2 and may be connected directly or through the network.

[0028]

Fig. 3 is a diagram showing the schematic structure of an example of a mobile telephone capable of giving a request for image storage. The mobile telephone 5 comprises a call processing section 58 for carrying out an ordinary call processing, a communicating section 57, an antenna section 59, and furthermore, an image storage

erasing section 50 for carrying out an image storage request processing, an image erase processing and a print order receipt processing. Since the call processing section 58 and the communicating section 57 are the same as those of the conventional art, detailed description will be omitted.

[0029]

The image storage erasing section 50 includes an interface section 51 for inputting digital image data from a removable image recording medium 6, an input section 52 for causing a user to input an operation, a communication interface section 53 for inputting and outputting data together with the communicating section 57, a display section 54, a storage section 56 and a control section 55. The control section 55 serves to control the whole image storage erasing processing, and is mainly constituted by a processor for executing a processing according to a program stored in the storage section 56. The processor constituting the input section 52, the display section 54, the storage section 56 and the control section 55 can be shared with that of the call processing section 58. Moreover, the image recording medium 6 is varied according to the manufacturer or type of a digital camera. Therefore, the interface section 51 has such a structure as to be connected to plural kinds of image

recording media.

[0030]

Next, a flow for carrying out a request of image storage by utilizing the system shown Fig. 1 will be described with reference to Fig. 4.

[0031]

A user who gives a request for storing a digital image by using a mobile telephone is previously registered as a digital image storage service user when making the contract of the mobile telephone. In the case in which a digital image photographed by means of a digital camera is to be stored, the image recording medium 6 recording digital image information is taken out of a digital camera and is connected to the interface section 51 of the mobile telephone 5 (Step 101). Then, an image based on the digital image information is displayed on the display section 54 to select an image for which a request for storage is to be given (Step 102).

[0032]

Next, a connection to the image storage server 2 is carried out based on a predetermined telephone number (Step 103). The image storage server 2 confirms the telephone number of a service user which is automatically received by referring to the service user table of the file device 23 (Step 104), and a response is given when

the storage request receipt can be carried out (Step 105). At this time, furthermore, a personal identification number may be required to be input. In the case in which the telephone number is not registered in the service user table, a response thereof is given and the process may be ended. In the case in which new registration can be carried out from a mobile phone, it may proceed into a registration processing. In the case in which the mobile telephone number is not utilized as a service user ID, an instruction for transmitting an ID is given after the connection and confirmation is carried out.

[0033]

After receiving a receipt enable response, the user transmits image information and print condition information (Step 106). The image storage server 2 receiving the image information to be stored transmits a receipt completion response to the mobile telephone 5 (Step 107), ends the communication and once disconnects a line (Step 108). In order to cause the mobile telephone 5 to carry out another processing such as a call and to prevent the amount of line usage from being increased in a connection state, the line is once disconnected. In order to decrease a time required for the communication, moreover, an image to be stored is previously selected before the connection. In the case in which all the images

recorded in the recording medium 6 are to be transmitted, this processing is not required.

[0034]

After the line is disconnected, the image storage server 2 stores the image information received in the storage area of the file device 23 (Step 109). Then, a line is connected to a mobile telephone receiving a request for storage and storage processing information is transmitted thereto (Step 110). The storage processing information includes at least a decision whether or not the storage processing has normally been carried out, and includes stored image ID information if the storage processing is not normally carried out.

[0035]

The mobile telephone receiving the storage processing information carries out a postprocessing including the erase of the transmitted digital image information recorded in the recording medium 6. The postprocessing method can be variously selected. When it is indicated that the storage processing information is normally stored, the transmitted image information is automatically erased as an example. In this case, it is premised that the recording medium used during image transmission is attached to the mobile telephone 5. Since a method of confirming the identity of the recording medium

is well known, description will be omitted. In the case in which the same recording medium is not attached, it is possible to display, on the display section 54, a notice that the same recording medium is to be attached.

[0036]

In the case in which only a part of the images is stored, a notice of the storage is displayed on the display section 54. In this case, it is also possible to subsequently carry out a processing of transmitting the image failing in storage to the image storage server, and the user is caused to select that the normally stored image information is automatically erased and the processing is ended or not.

[0037]

In the case in which there is an anxiety about the automatic erase of the recorded digital image, the erase processing may be executed after waiting for the confirmation of the execution of the erase processing.

[0038]

When a request for image storage is to be given, the system shown in Fig. 1 can give a request for a print order at the same time. The flow to be carried out in that case will be described with reference to Fig. 5. Since the flow of Fig. 5 is basically the same as that of Fig. 4, different portions from the portions in Fig.

4 will be mainly described.

[0039]

When images based on digital image information are displayed on the display section 54 to select an image for which a request for storage is to be given at Step 102, an image for which a request for a print order is to be given is extracted. Then, a print condition is input at Step 120. At least one of a printing method, a print size and the number of prints for each digital image to be printed is input as a print condition. As the printing method, it is possible to specify a printing medium such as a glossy paper or a plain paper in addition to glossy or mat color paper print, ink jet print and the creation of a transmission type film. In the case in which the same print condition is to be selected for a plurality of selected images, the print condition may be input collectively after the selection of an image.

[0040]

Subsequently, a receipt enable response is received from the image storage server (Step 105) and print condition information is then transmitted together with image information (Step 106). At this time, request information other than the print condition, for example, delivery time specifying information may be transmitted.

[0041]

The image storage server 2 executes an image storage processing at Step 109, and then connects a line to a mobile telephone receiving the storage request and transmits storage processing information at Step 110, and at the same time, transmits, to a predetermined print server, delivery information required for delivery such as the name of a print service user acquired from the service user table of the file device 23 and information about a registered delivery destination together with the image information and the print condition which are received.

[0042]

At the printing destination, the printing process is carried out based on the image information and the print condition which are transmitted to the print server (Step 122), and an order print thus created is delivered to the registered delivery destination which is transmitted (Step 123). A request for the delivery may be given to a distributor. When the delivery is completed, a delivery completion notice is transmitted to the order receiving server 2 by using the print server or another means (Step 124).

[0043]

The image storage server 2 receiving the delivery completion notice carries out an accounting process of

a print charge. While a method of adding the charge to a telephone charge is convenient for the accounting, another bank account or a credit settlement may be selected in advance. In the case of other methods, a bank account number is previously recorded in the service user table.

[0044]

According to such a processing, since a request for a print order can be easily given concurrently with image storage at a moving destination, a necessary print can be acquired immediately.

[0045]

The system shown in Fig. 1 can also give a request for a print order again after the storage of the image. The order request can be given from the terminal device 7 at home in addition to a mobile telephone. Fig. 6 shows a flow to be carried out when the order request is to be given from the mobile telephone.

[0046]

The flow of Fig. 6 shows the case in which a print request is given in such a state that the stored image information is unerased. A user giving a print order for a digital image displays, on the display section 54, images based on the stored image information which is recorded in the image recording medium 6 to select an image for which a print order is to be given (Step 130), and inputs

at least one of a printing method, a print size and the number of prints for each digital image to be printed as a print condition (Step 131). Subsequently, a connection to the image storage server 2 is carried out based on a predetermined telephone number (Step 132) and the image storage server 2 confirms the telephone number of a service user which is automatically received by referring to the service user table of the file device 23 (Step 133), and a response is given when the storage request can be received (Step 134).

[0047]

The user transmits print condition information after receiving a receipt enable response (Step 135). At this time, request information other than the print condition, for example, delivery time specifying information may be transmitted. The image storage server 2 receiving the print condition information to be printed transmits a receipt completion response to the mobile telephone 5 (Step 136) and the communication is thus ended. It is also possible to use such a structure that order information can be transmitted to the mobile telephone 5 together with the receipt completion response and the user can confirm the contents of the order.

[0048]

In the case in which the image of the recording medium

6 has been erased or a request for a print order is given through the terminal device 7 at home, it is impossible to select an image and to input a print condition before a connection to the image storage server 2. Therefore, the Step 132 is started and the connection to the image storage server 2 is carried out and the selection of an image and the input of a print condition are then executed upon receipt of the transmission of necessary image information. In this case, transfer image information does not need to have high precision.

[0049]

The image storage server 2 transmits, to a predetermined print server, delivery information required for the delivery such as the name of a print service user and information about a registered delivery destination which are acquired from the service user table of the file device 23 together with the image information and the print condition which are received (Step 137).

[0050]

At the printing destination, the printing process is carried out based on the image information and the print condition which are transmitted to the print server (Step 138), and an order print thus created is delivered to the registered delivery destination which is transmitted (Step 139). A request for the delivery may

be given to a distributor. When the delivery is completed, a delivery completion notice is transmitted to the image storage server 2 by using the print server or another means (Step 140).

[0051]

The image storage server 2 receiving the delivery completion notice carries out an accounting process of a print charge. While a method of adding the charge to a telephone charge is convenient for the accounting, another bank account or a credit settlement may be selected in advance. In the case of other methods, a bank account number is previously recorded in the service user table.

[0052]

The image information stored in the image storage server 2 is not only used for a request for a print order but can be downloaded into the terminal device 7 at home and can be utilized for various processings such as an edit processing. Moreover, it is also possible to transfer the image information to friends by electronic mail.

[0053]

In the case in which the stored image information is to be downloaded, an access is given to the image storage server to select predetermined image information in the same manner as described above. Since the downloading

operation itself is well known, description will be omitted.

[0054]

[Effect of the Invention]

As is apparent from the above description, the system according to the invention can confirm that image information transmitted to the image storage server at a moving destination through a mobile telephone is reliably stored in a file in the image storage server and can erase the image information of a medium without anxiety. By utilizing the stored image information, it is possible to easily give a print order for a photographed digital image at a moving destination through a mobile telephone or by means of a terminal device at home.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

Fig. 1 is a diagram showing the schematic structure of an image storage service system according to the invention,

Fig. 2 is a diagram showing the schematic structure of an image storage server,

Fig. 3 is a diagram showing the schematic structure of an example of a mobile telephone which can give a request for image storage,

Fig. 4 is a flow chart for giving the request for image storage,

Fig. 5 is a flow chart for giving a request for a print order together with the request for image storage, and

Fig. 6 is a flow chart for giving the request for a print order.

[Description of the Reference Numerals and Signs]

1 ··· network

2 ··· print image storage server

3 ··· print server

4 ··· base station

5 ··· mobile telephone

6 ··· image recording medium

21, 55 ··· control section

22, 56 ··· storage section

23 ··· file device

24, 57 ··· communicating section

50 ··· receipt processing section

51 ··· interface section

52 ··· input section

53 ··· communication interface section

54 ··· display section

58 ··· call processing section

FIG. 1

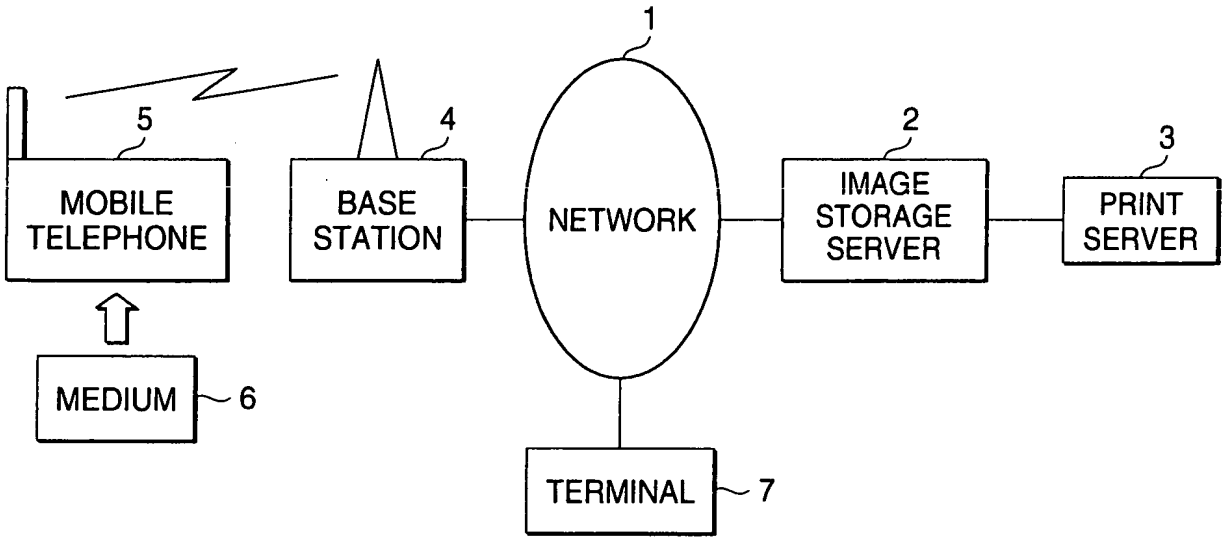


FIG. 2

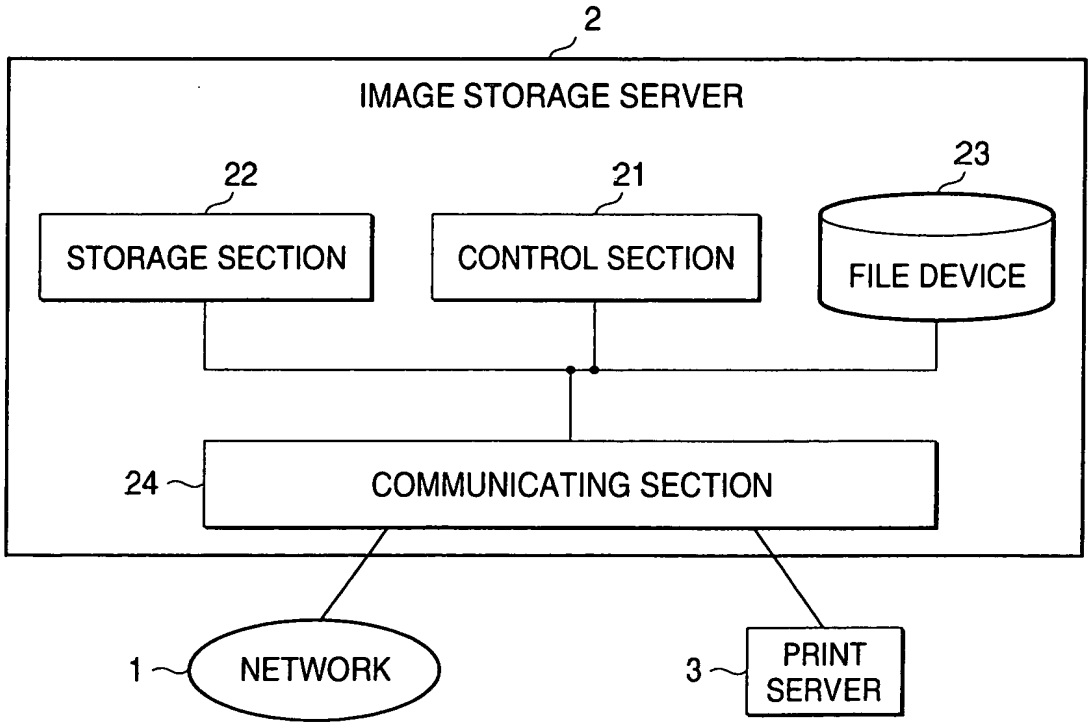


FIG. 3

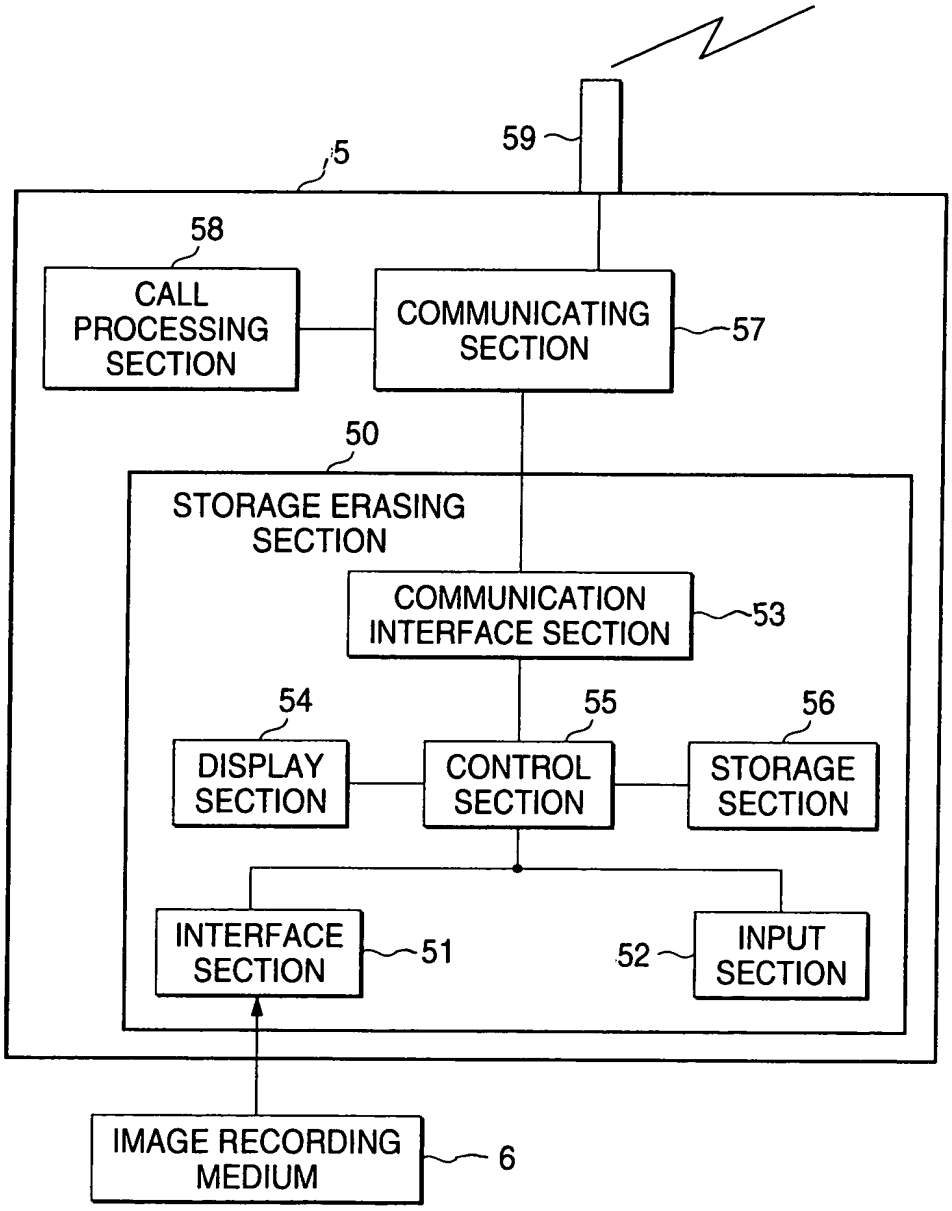


FIG. 4

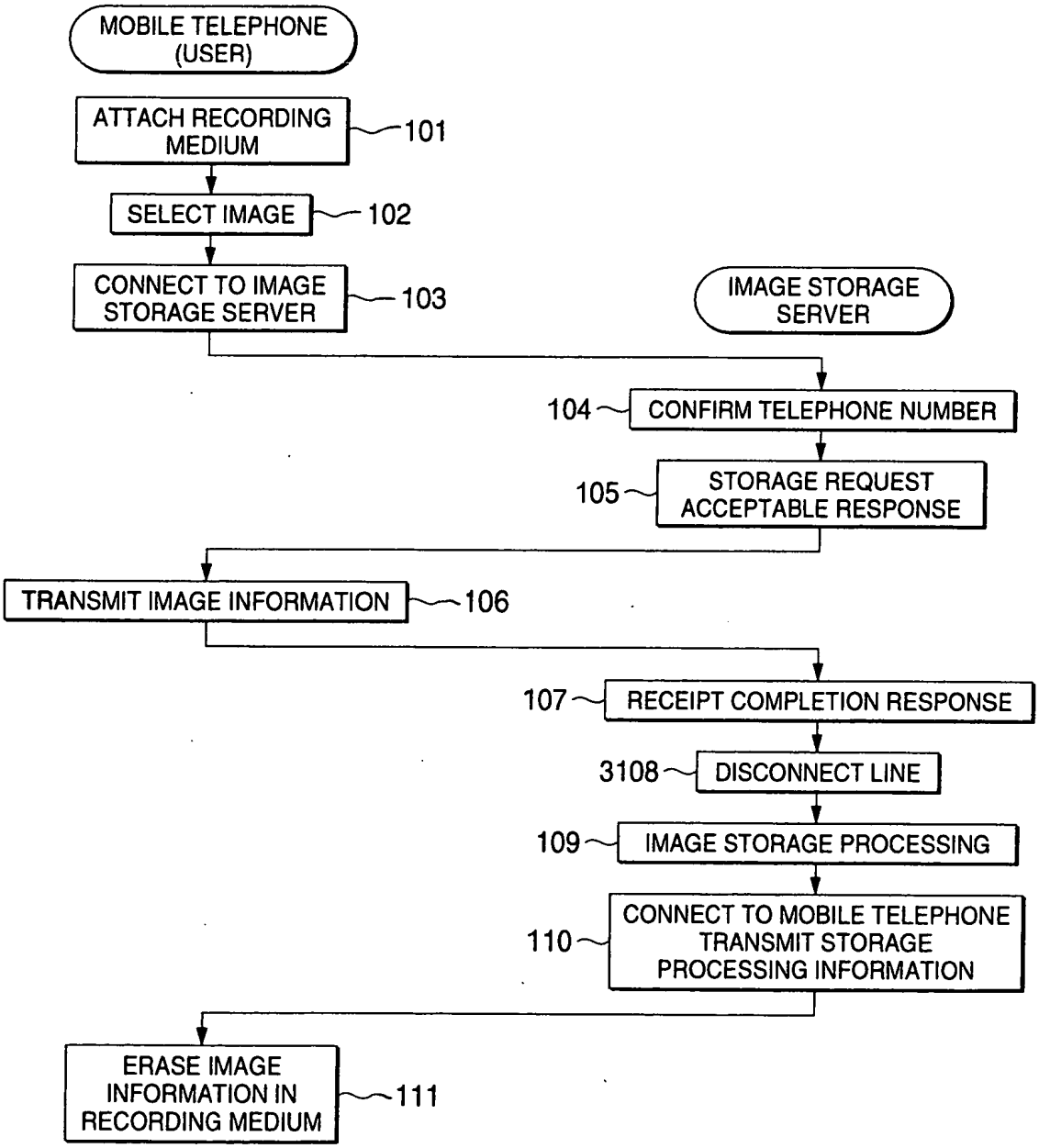


FIG. 5

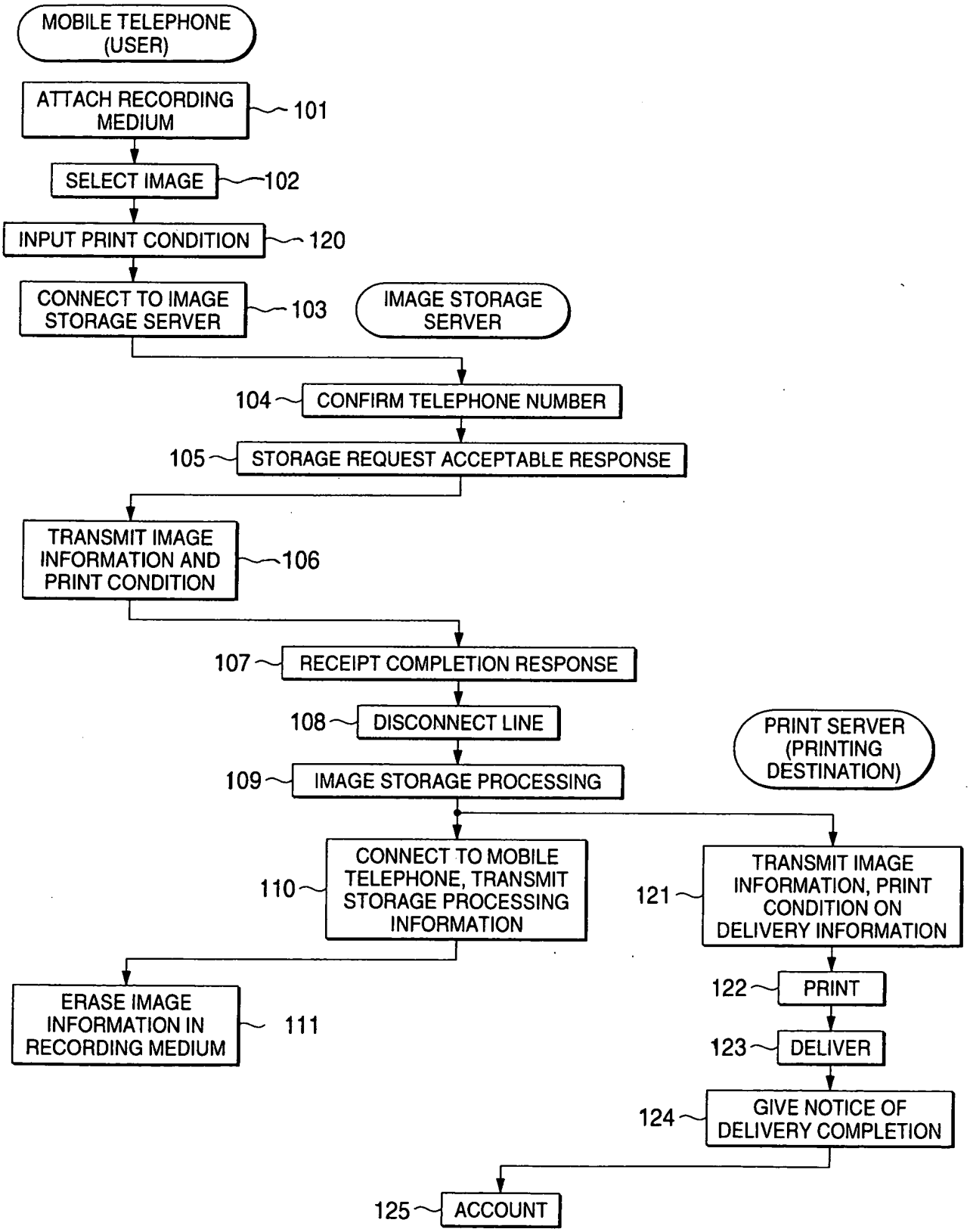
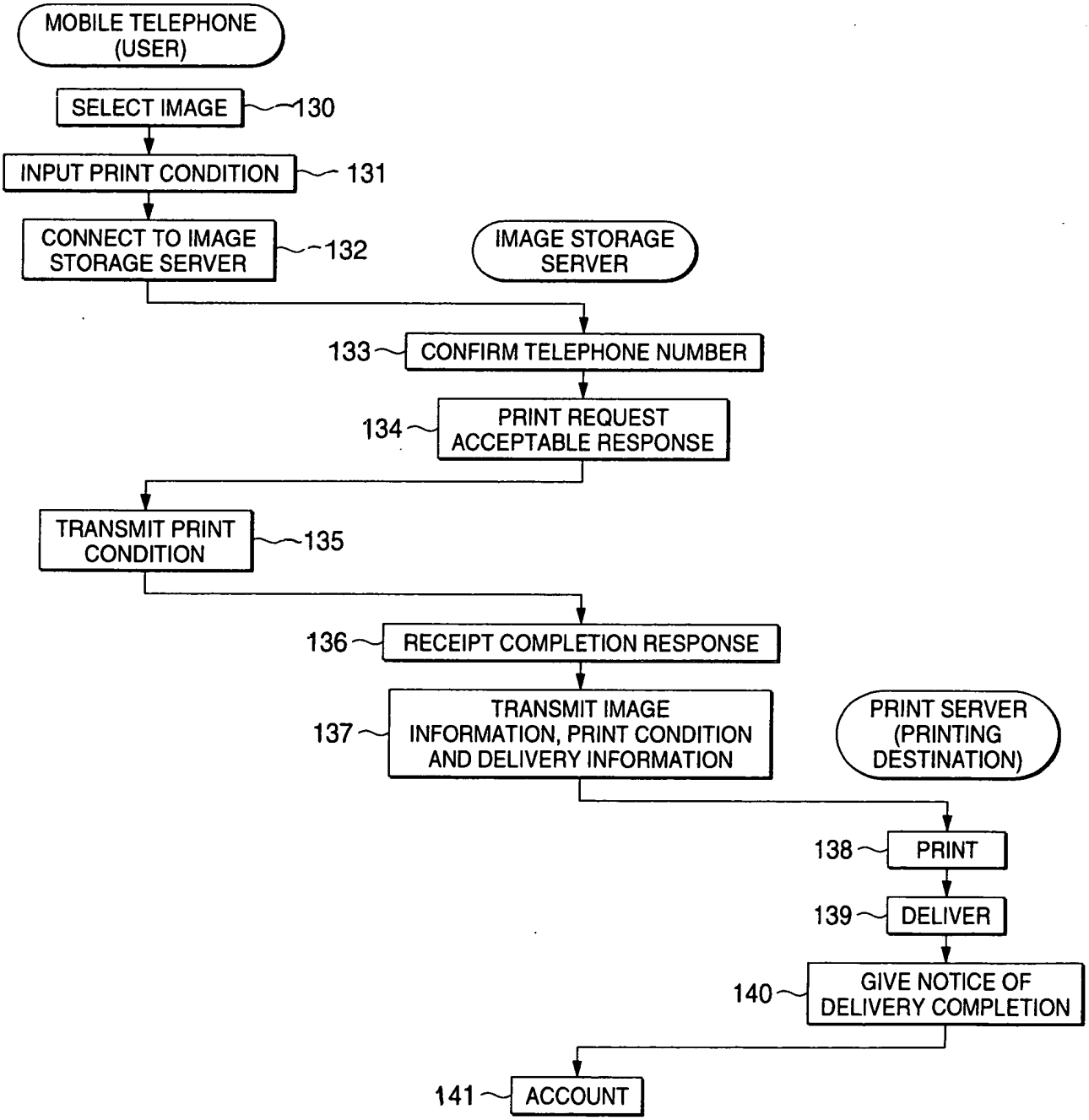


FIG. 6



[Designation of Document] Abstract

[Abstract]

[Problem] It is an object to provide an image storage service system capable of confirming that image information transferred at a moving destination is reliably stored at a transfer destination.

[Means for Resolution] A user requiring to transfer digital image information photographed by a digital camera attaches, to a mobile telephone 5, a recording medium 6 recording the photographed image which can be attached and removed to and from the digital camera, and transmits the digital image information to be stored to an image storage server 2 through a base station 4 and a network 1. When receiving the digital image information, the image storage server 2 stores the received image information and transmits, to the mobile telephone 5, storage processing information including a decision whether or not the storage has normally been carried out. The mobile telephone 5 carries out a processing of erasing the transmitted digital image information recorded in the recording medium 6 upon receipt of the storage processing information.

[Selected Drawing] Fig. 1